

Message Text

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SUBJ: SWEDEN TO ASSIST SAUDI ARABIA IN SOLVING ENVIRONMENTAL
AND WASTE DISPOSAL PROBLEMS

1. SAUDI ARABIA'S COMMERCE MINISTER SULAYMAN ABDUL AL-AZIZ AL-SULAYM, DURING HIS RECENT THREE-DAY VISIT IN SWEDEN, STATED HIS COUNTRY IS INTERESTED IN IMPORTING SWEDISH TECHNOLOGY AND KNOW-HOW IN THE FIELD OF ENVIRONMENTAL CARE AND WASTE DISPOSAL. HE ALSO SOUGHT SWEDEN'S ASSISTANCE IN ORGANIZING THEORETICAL AND PRACTICAL EDUCATION IN SAUDI ARABIA.

2. SAUDI ARABIA'S INTEREST IN BUYING SWEDISH TECHNOLOGY IN THE SPHERE OF ENVIRONMENTAL CARE WILL REPORTEDLY BE PROMPTLY FOLLOWED UP BY SWEDISH INDUSTRY. THE SWEDISH GOVERNMENT SHIPBUILDING GROUP AB SVENSKA VARV HAS ALREADY COMPLETED PLANS FOR PRESENTING ITS WATER PURIFYING TECHNOLOGY AT A CONFERENCE SCHEDULED IN DUBAI THIS AUTUMN. SWEDEN'S TRADE COMMISSION IN JIDDA HAS REPORTEDLY ALSO BEEN HOLDING DISCUSSIONS WITH SWEDISH COMPANIES WITH THE VIEW TO ENLISTING THEIR PARTICIPATION IN SOLVING SAUDI ARABIA'S SERIOUS WASTE DISPOSAL PROBLEMS. DR. SULAY FURTHER INDICATED AN INTEREST
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IN SWEDEN'S PUBLIC HEALTH AND WELFARE PROGRAM, NOTABLY THE FACILITIES FOR CARE OF THE AGED. HE CONCEDED THAT SAUDI ARABIA HAS A GREAT DEAL TO LEARN FROM SWEDEN'S EXPERIENCES IN THAT AREA, BUT ADDED THAT "SAUDI ARABIA WOULD MAKE SURE IT DID NOT REPEAT THE MISTAKES SWEDEN HAS MADE."

3. ACCORDING TO OFFICIAL SWEDISH STATISTICS, SWEDEN'S TRADE

WITH SAUDI ARABIA HAS EXPANDED CONSIDERABLY SINCE THE OIL CRISIS OF 1973-74. IN 1977 SWEDISH EXPORTS TO THAT COUNTRY WERE VALUED AT SKR 776 MILLION COMPARED TO SKR 370 MILLION IN 1975. IMPORTS FROM SAUDI ARABIA ROSE DURING THE SAME PERIOD TO SKR 1,750 MILLION FROM SKR 882 MILLION. WHILE THE IMPORTS CONSISTED ALMOST SOLELY OF OIL, THE EXPORTS WERE COMPOSED OF A BROAD RANGE OF MANUFACTURED ITEMS, NOTABLY TELECOMMUNICATIONS EQUIPMENT, ELECTRICAL MACHINERY AND APPARATUS, AND MOTOR VEHICLES. AT THE PRESENT TIME, SOME 2,000 SWEDISH CITIZENS ARE WORKING IN SAUDI ARABIA ON VARIOUS PROJECTS UNDER CONTRACTS AWARDED TO SWEDISH COMPANIES, INCLUDING L.M. ERICSSON, SKANSKA CEMENTGJUTERIET, AND OTHER PROMINENT FIRMS. THESE CONTRACTS ARE REPORTEDLY WORTH SEVERAL BILLION KRONOR.

4. TRUE, SWEDEN IS NOT AMONG SAUDI ARABIA'S MOST IMPORTANT TRADING PARTNERS BUT, NONETHELESS, THE LATTER COUNTRY'S INTEREST IN SWEDEN AS A SOURCE OF TECHNOLOGY AND INDUSTRIAL KNOWHOW APPEARS TO BE GROWING, AS CLEARLY EVIDENCED BY SEVERAL SAUDI ARABIAN MINISTERIAL VISITS TO SWEDEN DURING THE COURSE OF THE PAST YEAR. DURING HIS VISIT IN STOCKHOLM, DR. SULAYM EXTENDED AN INVITATION TO SWEDEN'S COMMERCE MINISTER STAFFAN BURENSTAM LINDER TO VISIT SAUDI ARABIA AS SOON AS FEASIBLE. THIS THE SWEDISH COMMERCE MINISTER EXPECTS TO DO DURING FEBRUARY OF 1979.

KENNEDY-MINOTT

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